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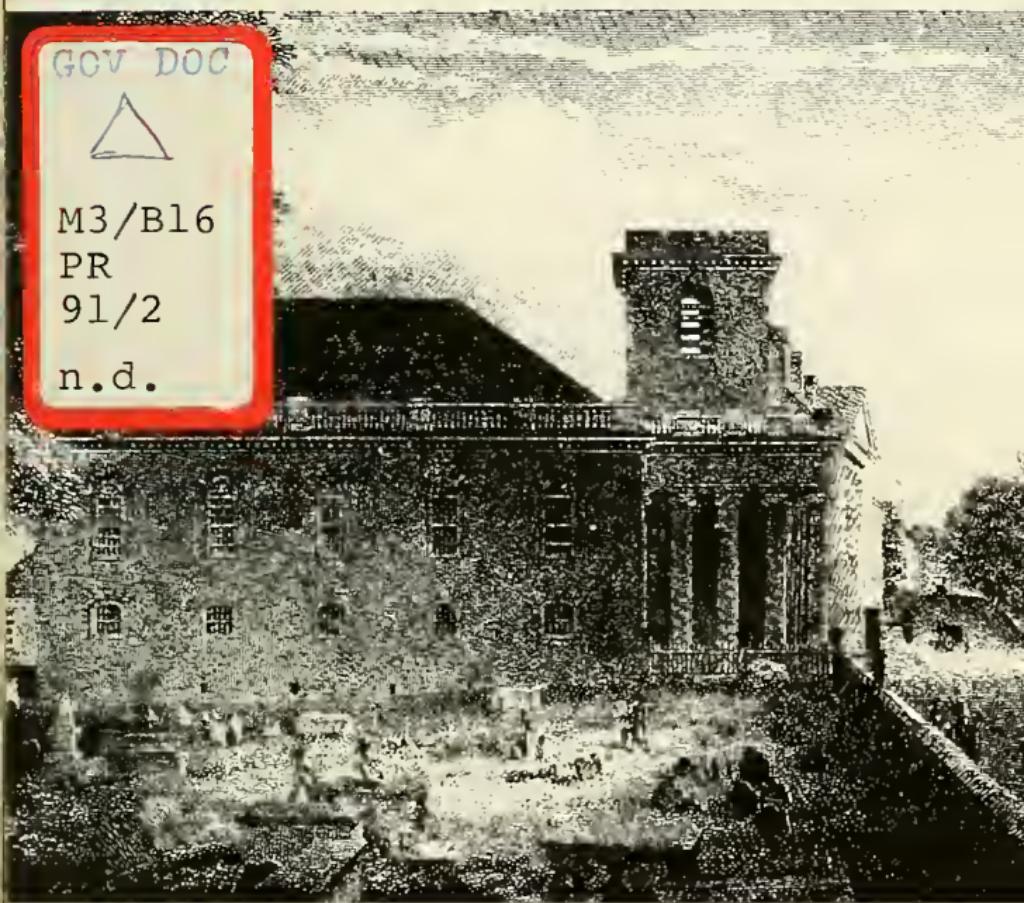
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HERE LIES AN IMPORTANT PART OF AMERICA'S PAST

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BOSTON'S HISTORIC BURYING GROUNDS

WELCOME

It may seem unlikely, but history comes alive in Boston's burying grounds. After our earliest citizens settled the colonies, preached from our first pulpits, fomented the Revolution and gave life to American art, education and government, many came here to their final rest.



Boston has 16 historic cemeteries throughout the city which date from 1630 to 1841. Those introduced here are open daily and three – King's Chapel, Granary and Copp's Hill – are located along the Freedom Trail.

BE AN ANGEL

These grounds are sacred and fragile. Please observe the following rules:

- *Absolutely no gravestone rubbing allowed, please take photos instead.*
- *Do not sit or lean on the stones.*
- *Use trash barrels for litter.*
- *No dogs allowed.*
- *Possession or drinking of alcoholic beverages prohibited.*

Please Note

If you're looking for a particular grave, please ask for the location maps in the church nearest the cemetery. Further burying ground information may be obtained from the Bostonian Society Library at 15 State Street.

READ ANY GOOD GRAVESTONES LATELY?

If you have, thank the Charlestown Carver, the Lamsons, "JN," "WC," and others who made gravestone carving part of their life's work.

The oldest gravestones are simply carved field-stones and were often only inscribed with initials and dates by a family member or friend. Next, grey, red and green slate dominated the fashion in grave markers and featured iconography, or symbol language, that was quite "readable." Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, winged skull motifs symbolized man's mortality while angels suggested resurrection. Urn and willow carvings became popular after the American Revolution when tastes in the new republic ran to classical themes.

Headstones in early graveyards often faced east and were paired with footstones creating a bed-like arrangement for eternal rest.



RESTORATION IN PROGRESS

350 years is a long time and weather, vandals, deferred maintenance and even well-intended restoration efforts took their toll on Boston's historic cemeteries. In 1985, the Historic Burying Grounds Initiative was established to reverse the deterioration in all 16 cemeteries.

More than \$2.5 million has been committed to the initiative by the administration of Boston Mayor Raymond L. Flynn and by other contributors. Another \$4 million is needed to complete the effort.

To date, retaining walls have been rebuilt and hundreds of gravestones have been reset and repaired. Structures have been restored and security and maintenance increased.

Still, much remains to be done. If you'd like to help, please call the Planning and Development Office at the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. We need your support!





REBUILDING BOSTON:

Capital Improvements From Burying Grounds To Playgrounds

The Historic Burying Grounds Initiative, the program to restore inactive cemeteries, is just one part of an overall effort by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department to restore Boston's park system. More than \$120 million will be invested in improvements in every neighborhood of the city.

Now that you've had a look at some of Boston's historic cemeteries, we hope you'll visit our parks. We think you'll find them greener, cleaner and more alive than ever.



*Photo Credits: Work by Gilbert Stuart and Paul Revere
courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. King's Chapel
engraving and photo courtesy of Bostonian Society.*

KING'S CHAPEL BURYING GROUND

Tremont Street north of School Street
Established 1630

King's Chapel was established as Boston's first town graveyard and takes its name from the adjoining church, built at a later date.



King's Chapel Burying Ground circa 1895.

Isaac Johnson, an early, prominent Boston settler, owned the land. He was interred in the fall of 1630 in a corner of his garden plot, as was his request. By the year's end, there were many graves prompting one observer to write "Brother Johnson's garden is getting to be a poor place for vegetables." No stone marks Johnson's grave.

Burials continued at King's Chapel until 1796, despite a gravedigger's 1739 complaint that King's Chapel and two other cemeteries "were so fulled with dead bodies that they were obliged oft times to bury them four deep."

The present King's Chapel grounds reflect numerous changes to the original site beginning as early as the 17th century with the encroachment of the church. The last major gravestone alignment was in the 1930's.

Things to consider at King's Chapel Burying Ground:

- Preservation began early. In 1810 the tomb of Capt. William Davis (d. 1675) was rebuilt by his great-grandson.
- Grave markers were first realigned about 1850 inspiring Oliver Wendell Holmes' ire: "...the upright stones have been shuffled about like chessmen and nothing short of the Day of Judgment will tell whose dust lies beneath... Shame! Shame! Shame!"
- Many tomb markers along the front fence bear beautiful family crests, the corresponding vaults are actually below the sidewalk.

COPP'S HILL BURYING GROUND

Hull Street between Salem & Snowhill Streets
Established 1659



Puritan minister Cotton Mather is entombed in Copp's Hill Burying Ground.

Among others, Copp's Hill Burying Ground honors over 1,000 Colonial black Americans who dwelled in the "New Guinea" community located nearby in Boston's North End. In addition, Prince Hall, an early anti-slavery activist, Revolutionary War soldier and founder of the Negro Freemasonry Order is buried in Copp's Hill.

The less famous are remembered here as well. Here lies young Woodbridge, stabbed in a duel on Boston Common in 1728. (His opponent is said to have died later of grief and heartbreak.) Here lies Judge Samuel Sewall, the only judge ever to admit publicly that he was wrong about the Salem Witches, and Ezekial Cheever, for 70 years a teacher.

Things to consider at Granary Burying Ground:

- Now a prospering commercial area, Granary's first neighbors were a town granary where stores were kept for the poor, an almshouse for the sick and aged, and a bridewell - a jail.
- John Hancock's devoted servant Frank lies buried at his side noted only by his first name.
- The Franklin monument honors Ben's family, he himself is buried in Philadelphia.

CENTRAL BURYING GROUND

Boston Common (Boylston Street)
Established 1756

Unlike some of our historic burying grounds, Central retains what is believed to be the original, east-west configuration of headstones (and footstones.) In Puritan and Colonial times, this layout was favored to allow the grave's occupant to face the trumpet's call on the Day of Judgment.

In 1895, subway excavations led to the discovery of the cemetery's original southern boundary - about 1,100 bodies were discovered under Boylston Street and were reinterred in a common grave in the northwest corner.



Gilbert Stuart, who painted this portrait of George Washington at Dorchester Heights, is buried in Central Burying Ground.

Things to consider at Central Burying Ground:

- Legend holds that American and British soldiers (the former were victims of Bunker Hill, the latter of disease incurred during the Siege of Boston) lie buried side by side in an unmarked grave.
- The inscriptions which mention "strangers" refer to Irish Catholic immigrants buried here.
- Of the 487 grave markers here, the earliest reads 1749, pre-dating the cemetery's founding.
- A man known as our first composer, William Billings, noted American artist Gilbert Stuart, and at least a dozen Boston Tea Party members are all buried in Central.

GRANARY BURYING GROUND

Tremont Street north of Park Street
Established 1660



Paul Revere, buried in Granary, was a silversmith by trade. This lovely piece belongs to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

This burying ground holds the remains of some of our greatest heroes and patriots: Paul Revere, John Hancock, Robert Treat Paine, James Otis and Samuel Adams. When the victims of the Boston Massacre were laid to rest here, 3,000 colonists came to honor them. Now, every summer day brings another 3,000 visitors to Granary.

John Hancock

Sam Adams

Rob Treat Paine

Granary honors three signers of the Declaration of Independence.

CITY OF BOSTON CEMETERIES...

Bennington Street, 1838—East Boston
Bunker Hill, 1807—Charlestown
Central, 1756—Boston Common
Copp's Hill, 1659—North End
Dorchester North, 1634—Upham's Corner
Dorchester South, 1814—Lower Mills
Eliot (Eustis Street), 1630—Roxbury
Evergreen Cemetery, 1848—Brighton
Fairview Cemetery, 1892—Hyde Park
King's Chapel, 1630—Downtown
Granary, 1660—Downtown
Hawes/Union, 1816/41—South Boston
Market Street, 1764—Brighton
Mount Hope Cemetery, 1851—Roslindale
Phipp's Street, 1630—Charlestown
South End, 1810—Washington Street
Walter Street, 1711—Roslindale
Westerly, 1683—West Roxbury



CITY OF BOSTON
Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
Lawrence A. Dwyer,
Commissioner

For further information contact:

Historic Burying Grounds Initiative
Boston Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, MA 02118
(617) 725-4505

Front Cover: An 1833 engraving of King's Chapel Burying Ground.